

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 1 through 17 are pending, with Claims 1, 13, and 15 through 17 being independent. Claims 13 through 16 were withdrawn from consideration. Claim 1 has been amended.

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended in granting and conducting on November 14, 2003, a personal interview with Applicant's representative. At the interview, Applicant's representative and the Examiner discussed the outstanding rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 over U.S. Patent No. 5,526,093 (Takahashi), which is respectfully traversed, as well as proposed amendments to the claims, and the claims have been amended as discussed at the interview. As a result of said amendments and as discussed at the interview, Claim 1 recites, inter alia, that the illumination unit collectively illuminates the entire pattern effective area of the photo-mask, which area is contained within the illumination range of the illumination unit, and that the control means synchronizes and controls while keeping an entire shot area of the wafer contained within the projection range, in view of which recitation Claim 1 is respectfully submitted to be allowable.

Also at the interview, the Examiner inquired as to why the mask stage would move the photo-mask. In response, Applicant respectfully submits that by means of the present invention, e.g., the exposure processing of each shot may be executed while moving the wafer stage at a constant velocity (see, e.g., Claim 2 which recites constant or


substantially constant velocity), and in the case that the wafer is so moved by drive-controlling of the wafer stage, the reticle, for synchronization, may move corresponding to the exposing process of the shot, since if the wafer does not move synchronously to the reticle, a pattern of the reticle may be exposed onto the wafer as the shifted pattern of the reticle in the exposing process of the shot. (Of course, the claims are not limited to the disclosed embodiments.) Applicant earnestly believes that the foregoing addresses the Examiner's inquiry, and respectfully requests that the Examiner contact Applicant's undersigned if any further questions should arise.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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